

Agricultural Marketing Service  
Office of the Deputy Administrator for Marketing Programs  
Fruit and Vegetable Division  
Fresh Products Branch, Field Office  
GS-303-5/6 Administrative Support Assistant (Office Automation)

SJ FV54

## I. INTRODUCTION

This position is located in a Field Office of the Fresh Products Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Division, Agricultural Marketing Service. The Field Office is responsible for the inspection and grading of a full range of fresh fruits and vegetables in a designated geographical area. Inspection and grading services are performed on a user-fee basis.

The incumbent performs a variety of administrative support services for the Terminal Market service center at this field office.

This is a multilevel position description in which the full performance level, GS-6, is fully described. At the GS-5 level, the incumbent is gaining the necessary knowledge of the automated billings system and of the Fresh Products inspection program to perform work at the full performance level.

## II. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The incumbent provides a variety of administrative support functions for the office, including microcomputer duties in connection with the maintenance of accounts, billings, and collection of user-fees for commodity grading and inspection services. The incumbent serves as an expert in the use and operation of the Terminal Market Inspection Database (TMID).

Reviews, verifies, and reconciles financial related data on grading certificates. Ensures completeness of data, accuracy of computations, and appropriateness of monetary data. Enters data and oversees the accuracy of information entered into the database. Monitors the system for accuracy in computations, proper receipt and transmittal of data, and correct accountability of fees. Verifies validity of certificate numbers, applicant information, product identification, and product grade and condition. Transmits certificate data to headquarters and NFC for all certificates processed by the service center.

Checks data for accuracy in billing summaries and special reports. Regularly backs up system data and periodically archives data for long-term filing. Based on information output, determines where mistakes and/or problems exist in the data and/or system. Takes action to reconcile and enter corrections into the database using proper correction channels. If necessary, relays problem to headquarters for review and resolution. Submits corrected reports, summaries, etc. for final printing and forwards to appropriate destination (e.g. NFC, applicant, OIC, etc.). The incumbent

is responsible for accuracy of fees, charges, inspector and applicant information, ensuring all technical information on certificates is entered accurately into the database, and for monitoring certificate accountability.

Communicates by electronic or voice telephone with the National Finance Center to cross reference data, monitor and gain information on delinquent accounts, electronically transmit billing data, inquire about misapplied payments, etc. Maintains account information in TMID and BLCO and cross-checks TMID and Program Billings and Collections (BLCO) accounts for accuracy and compatibility.

Works in conjunction with the National Finance Center and headquarters in the collection of delinquent accounts by contacting vendors/applicants, assessing late payment interest, and ensuring payments are properly applied. If necessary, forwards uncollectible accounts (with supporting documents) to NFC and appropriate copies to headquarters. Responsible for the collection and transfer of COD payments to lock box and ensuring system reflects COD accounts as such.

Where applicable, is responsible for the software and hardware installation, day-to-day monitoring, and maintenance of the Banyan Vines Network for the office. Maintains necessary system operations logs and backup tape cartridges. Through consultation with the headquarters office, determines what system requirements are necessary to support office's administrative workload. Provides needed documentation and feedback to headquarters to implement changes.

Instructs lower level clerical employees in the use of automated data processing equipment to include operation of input terminals, printer, and other equipment as necessary to input information and make corrections to the database, retrieve data, and disseminate appropriately.

Operates and maintains a variety of hardware components comprising the service center's automated system which includes personal computer, modem, disk drives, backup tape drive, and printer.

Prepares a variety of required program billing reports concerning activities of offices. In consultation with headquarters, sets up programs to run various office reports.

Provides a variety of office automation services which may include typing of activity reports and correspondences with applicants. Composes and types correspondence either independently or on brief verbal instructions on rough drafts from the OIC. Coordinates office administrative activities, including distributing mail, receiving telephone calls, and handling routine requests independently.

Receives daily requests for grader service from applicants. Obtains proper data from the requester and relays to the OIC and/or Assistant OIC. May assist OIC in scheduling graders for inspection assignments. Responds to telephone inquiries for general information regarding billing, collections, applicants, and inspectors.

Prepares and submits T&A reports, travel vouchers, etc. for inspectors in immediate office and other serviced field offices. Cross checks T&As against billing documents to assure appropriate reflection of hours worked and time billed to plants.

Requisitions office supplies, equipment, and billing forms. Establishes and maintains all office files and records including directives, handbooks, manuals, and issues grading and inspection certificates. Maintains inventories and accountability of Field Office property, certificates, and forms. Conducts annual mail, telephone, space, etc. surveys and other administrative surveys, as requested.

Adheres to Equal Employment and Civil Rights policies, goals, and objectives in performing the duties of this position. Assures that written and oral communications are bias-free and that differences of other employees and clients are respected and valued.

### III. EVALUATION FACTORS

#### 1. Knowledge Required by the Position Level 1-4, 550 pts.

Knowledge of USDA, AMS, NFC, and Division accounts maintenance system techniques, procedures, and practices to maintain user-fee billings and collections and prepare and submit reports.

Knowledge of USDA, AMS, NFC, and Divisional policies, regulations, guidelines, and systems associated with the financial and computer assistance and general clerical activities of the field office necessary to monitor and oversee the input and output of terminal market data into the system.

Knowledge of the fresh products grading and inspection program mission, functions, and objectives as they apply and relate to the financial and computer assistance and general clerical activities of the field office.

A working knowledge of MS-DOS, Windows, word processing software, and microcomputer systems support. In-depth knowledge of the TMID in order to correctly process certificate corrections, archive and restore data, correct charge errors, troubleshoot system errors, implement rate changes, and direct and assist in others in the use of the system. The incumbent may be required to have knowledge of Local Area Network systems maintenance.

Knowledge of the National Finance Center's procedures for handling billings and collection functions to coordinate and communicate on applicant accounts.

Knowledge of office routine and procedures, accepted clerical practices, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and required formats.

Ability to establish rapport and conduct oneself in a tactful and diplomatic manner with vendors and program officials at all levels.

Skill in operating a microcomputer, word processor, electronic typewriter, or computer terminal. Skill in operating related equipment such as printer, modems, local area networks, etc. A qualified typist is required.

2. Supervisory Controls          Level 2-3, 275 pts.

Receives supervision from the Officer-in-Charge. The OIC makes assignments in terms of general objectives and instructions and is available for assistance with unusual situations and difficult problems. Technical guidance on the microcomputer and TMID is obtained from headquarters.

The incumbent independently plans and carries out daily work assignments and handles routine problems and deviations following established procedures and guidelines.

Work is spot-checked for conformity with program policies and procedures.

3. Guidelines                      Level 3-2, 125 pts.

Guidelines include USDA, AMS, NFC, and Divisional fiscal, administrative, and database regulations manuals, handbooks, and directives applicable to the computer, financial, and general clerical activities associated with the fresh fruit and vegetable grading and inspection program. Guidelines are generally specific in nature, but may not be totally applicable in every situation.

The incumbent is required to use judgment in locating and selecting the most appropriate guidelines and making minor deviations to adapt them in specific cases. Situations which require interpretation or significant deviation from the guidelines are referred to the OIC, and/or headquarters.

4. Complexity                      Level 4-2, 75 pts.

The nature of the work involves the maintenance and input of accounts, billings, and collection of user-fees for grading and inspection services and the performance of a variety of general clerical support duties. The incumbent must be familiar with a wide variety of subjects including procurement, billings and collection, basic accounting procedures, and microcomputer operations. Incumbent must be alert to changes in regulations and procedures and make adjustments accordingly.

While the transactions and accounts vary, the tasks and applicable documentation and input screens are standardized, subject to similar treatment, and are recurring in nature. The incumbent

is expected to periodically check the database and network systems for inaccuracies in reported data and calculations.

5. Scope and Effect Level 5-3, 150 pts.

The incumbent is expected to identify and correct errors in documents, summary reports, and records, monitor and follow-up on delinquent accounts, submit reports, and reconcile discrepancies in the generated accounting reports.

The incumbent must ensure requests are received accurately with all pertinent information. Discrepancies and errors can cause problems in rendering inspection service. All information relayed to inspectors or OIC must be clear, accurate, and complete.

The purpose of the work is to facilitate the prompt and accurate reimbursement of rendered grading and inspection services through the use of the terminal market database and to assist in smooth operation of inspection program at several terminal markets. The reputation of the Agency and Department rests on the accuracy and timeliness of charges made to industry and on the ability of the graders to carry out inspection requests in a timely manner. The work assists the OIC and graders in carrying out work of the office and headquarters office in projecting, planning, and controlling costs and revenues.

6. Personal Contacts Level 6-2, 25 pts.

Contacts are with industry representatives and users, Federal and State government personnel, headquarters staff, field office coworkers, National Finance Center staff, and the general public.

7. Purpose of Contacts Level 7-1, 20 pts.

Contacts are for the purpose of receiving instructions, exchanging information, and resolving work related problems.

8. Physical Demands Level 8-1, 5 pts.

The work is sedentary. However, the employee may be required to walk, stand, bend, and carry relatively light items such as books, files, and tape cartridges.

9. Work Environment Level 9-1, 5 pts.

The work is performed in an office setting.

TOTAL POINTS - 955 - GS-05